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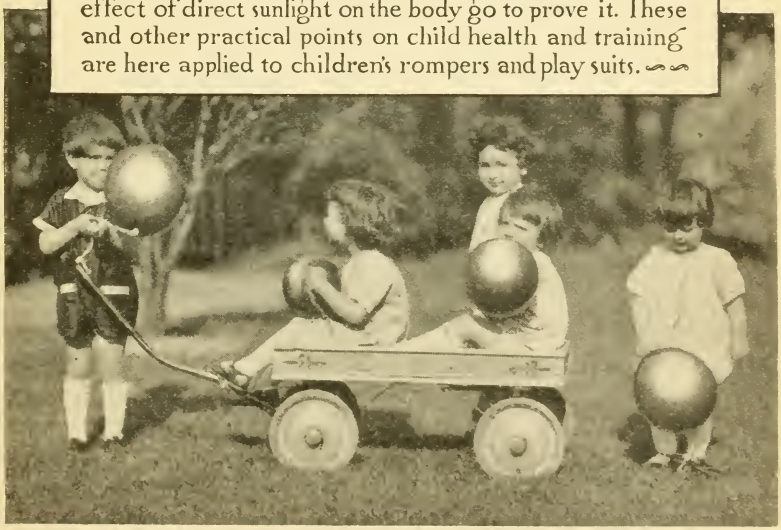
CHILDREN'S ROMPERS

LEAFLET NO. 11

The clothes of the young child help make the man. Recent findings of science on the far-reaching importance of habits formed in early childhood, and on the beneficial effect of direct sunlight on the body go to prove it. These and other practical points on child health and training are here applied to children's rompers and play suits.



CHILDREN'S ROMPERS

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WHEN the child first begins to investigate the world "on his own," rompers are a necessity. A child does not have the best opportunity of developing his body and disposition if he gets tangled up in a dress and petticoat every time he starts to creep. The romper is the child's overall and can be worn by both boys and girls up to 6 or 8 years of age. It protects the underwear and keeps the soil on an outside layer which can be easily peeled off. This cuts down laundry without irritating commands to keep out of the dirt.

Select roomy garments with no tight bands. The neck, legs, and belt should be loose. Tight bands reduce surface circulation and may be the cause of irritability and cold feet. Raglan sleeves or kimono sleeves with a seam on the shoulder allow the most freedom over the chest and around the armhole. A few gathers at the neck line are also advisable to provide fullness over the chest. The romper must be long enough through the crotch so that as the child bends it does not bind. If too tight it will not only affect the posture of the child but may lead to bad habits.

Choose type suitable to age of child. When diapers are worn, rompers should permit an easy change and conceal the bulky diaper. During the "in-between" period, when accidents still occur, a romper permitting a diaper as well as one which is attractive with other undergarments is advisable.

As soon as the child can control his hands he should be trained to dress and undress himself. It is valuable training, is a safe occupation, and develops concentration and pride of accomplishment. To make self-dressing possible rompers and other garments must open down the front.

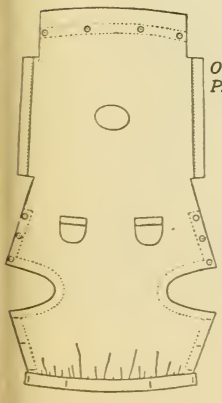
Avoid novelties. Odd closings, bows, ruffles, and collars do not belong on rompers. If the color is becoming and the cut of the garment is simple and pleasing, few decorative features are needed.

Choose the right material. Cotton materials are the most appropriate as they will withstand frequent washing. The child under 2 should wear soft, smooth materials, such as gingham, cotton charmeuse, cotton crêpe, sateen, prints, and fine broadcloth. The older child can wear such sturdy fabrics as galatea, khaki, gingham, suiting, or poplin. During hot weather fabrics which are too stiff and heavy should not be chosen, as they do not permit enough ventilation.

THE envelope romper which has a triangular flap sewed to the front and lapped over the back is far more satisfactory than the old type of envelope romper which buttons through the crotch. It is planned for the child wearing diapers. The buttons are few in number, three to five are enough, and the strain is less, so the buttonholes do not pull out as in the crotch-opening romper. The fastenings are easier to reach and are less unpleasant to open when the garment is soiled.

TRIANGULAR FLAP

THE romper with the opening down the side of the leg is planned for the child still untrained in good toilet habits. The side opening makes it easy to change the diaper, and the unshaped portion between the legs fits comfortably over it. When the child is well trained the sides can be sewed up instead of buttoned. If made in two pieces an extra lower section may be provided so that when soiled it can be removed with the diaper. The one-piece type shown in the drawing is even easier to make and to iron.



One-Piece Pattern

SIDE OPENING

FRONT OPENING

A LITTLE GIRL can soon learn to dress and care for herself in this romper. It opens down the front and needs only three large buttons as fastenings. The back has a drop seat with four large buttons placed two on each side, where the child can reach them. The crotch is shaped to make the romper fit neatly and the legs are without cloth or elastic bands. The bloused effect is gained by placing a few gathers on the side of the leg. There are gathers at the neck line to give fullness over the chest, and there is no collar to complicate ironing or get in the child's way. This garment combines all these hygienic features, and yet is attractive and as feminine as any little girl could wish.

FRONT OPENING - DROP SEAT

THIS BOY'S ROMPER has a thoroughly masculine quality even though the severity of the dark-brown sateen is relieved with the light-tan facings. The collar is a straight piece of material and is not large enough to bother him or the laundress. The kimono sleeves with shoulder seams provide ample width though the chest, and the straight short legs have good proportions. This romper also has a simple front opening and a drop seat. Pockets are provided for string, stones, and the "what-nots" dear to the boy's heart.

ELASTIC BANDS around the legs are not advisable, and cloth bands that are tight enough to hold the garment above the knee check surface circulation in the child's legs. If the bands are looser they allow the trouser legs to drop below the knee, and the child is constantly hitching them up. To avoid this annoyance the fullness should come not in the length but in the width of the garment. Then the bands need not be tight. The measurement for the length of the bands should be taken on the child's thigh 5 inches above the knee cap; then if the bloomer slides up it will not bind.

CLOTH LEG BANDS

KNITTED LEG BANDS

IF a knicker or blouse leg is particularly desired, tightly knitted wool bands may be made for the legs of rompers. The knitted bands have more elasticity than the cloth bands and will stay above the knee without excessive binding. The blouse in this case should be in the length so that the bands will not have to slide up. When tight bands are used on the romper, tears frequently come at the seams between the legs. This is often because the garment has too short a crotch seam and the bands keep the romper from sliding up the leg.

STRAIGHT LEGS

BECAUSE of difficulty of adjusting the cloth and elastic bands, straight-legged rompers are highly advisable for both boys and girls. They are comfortable and easier to iron and make than bloomers. They may be shaped between the legs or cut on a fold. In either case the bottom may be hemmed, faced, or bound. If the garment is cleverly planned, it can be just as smart as the blouse-legged romper. Attractive features of the one shown are the comfortable fullness, the raglan sleeve, and the attractive front closing with blue buttons matching the stitchery.

MANY arrangements have been tried in the attempt to find something better than the drop-seat closing, but for the older child it still stands as the most convenient. The buttons are well arranged on the garment pictured. A child can unbutton four buttons arranged two at each side more quickly than one at each side and one in the middle. If the garment is made at home, it is wise to add an inch or two to the shirt tail that falls under the drop seat. This is an extra precaution against its pulling out. If a romper is too large it may be shortened by running a larger hem in the legs and also a tuck through the drop seat.

THE DROP SEAT

SEMITRANSPARENT TOPS

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THE BENEFICIAL ACTION of the direct sunlight on the unclothed body is now generally recognized. Many times supervised sun baths with no clothes are out of the question. An excellent solution is the sun romper with a semitransparent top of lawn, voile, or bobbinet. The boy's sun romper is modeled after a track suit and has low neck, large armholes, and straight short pants, while the girl's garment is a romper with a fold between the legs. These rompers button on the shoulders and are cut low under the arms. The best material for sun suits is a loosely woven cotton fabric, but for the lower sections which come into frequent contact with mother earth prints and colored cottons may be used. In these airy little garments the sunbeams can be caught by rosy skins even while play is in progress.

¶ Cotton fabrics that will stand frequent washing and ironing are best for rompers.

¶ Children over 3 years should have garments with a front opening to make self-dressing easier.

¶ Collars are unnecessary on rompers.

¶ Raglan sleeves or kimono sleeves with a seam on the shoulder permit the greatest amount of freedom.

¶ There should be plenty of fullness over the chest.

¶ The legs should be straight or should have loose bands. If the bands are used, the length should be determined by the measurement of the child's thigh 5 inches above the knee.

¶ The blouse of the romper legs should be in the width, not in the length.

¶ Buttons should be fairly large in size, and the buttonholes should be firm. It is a good plan to reinforce bands where the buttonholes are to be worked. The buttons should be sewed on firmly and have a long shank.

¶ Garments to be ironed with a mangle should have closings heavily faced back on the side having the buttons, so that the buttons will sink into the cloth and go through the mangle without breaking.

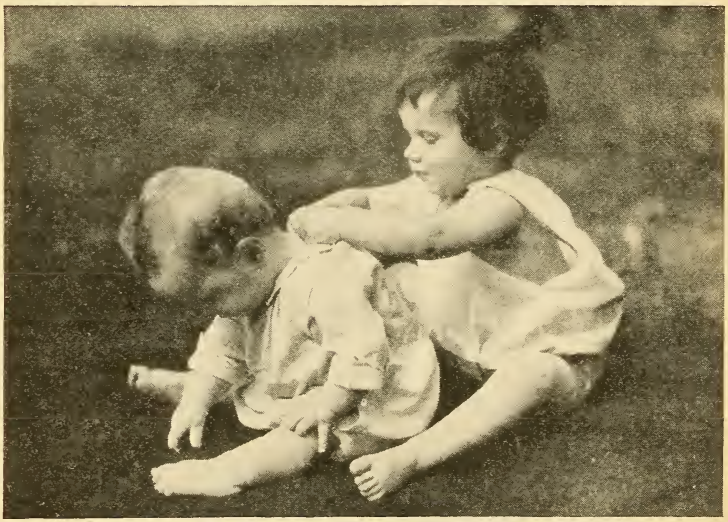
¶ The belt across the front and the belt on the top of the drop seat should be divided at the side seams so that the front buttons will not have to be unfastened to drop the back.

¶ Rompers should be generously long between the shoulder and crotch and wide between the legs to assure freedom.

¶ All points receiving strain, such as crotch seams, plackets, and pocket tops, should be stayed and double stitched.

¶ The side-opening romper and the triangular or oblong flap romper are best suited to the diaper age.

¶ The color and proportions of the garment should suit the child.



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